

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4606

June 16, 2022

The Honorable Adam Smith
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Rogers
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Rogers,

As the House Armed Services Committee proceeds to markup the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), I request that you oppose any effort to amend the Military Selective Service Act (MSSA) to require young women to register with the Selective Service.

Thousands of women serve admirably in the United States Armed Forces, and I am grateful for their service and sacrifice to our country. But, this is not a question of the dedication and willingness of American women to step up and serve their country, but whether we as a country will force the horrors of war upon our wives, our sisters, and our daughters. Under no circumstances should Congress greenlight a future that cripples the American family by sending mothers and daughters to the frontlines – drafted to be combat replacements for casualties on the battlefield – while fathers and sons stay home.

Requiring women to register for the draft does not advance our national security objectives – the only metric by which the NDAA should be measured. Despite this, 316 Members of the House voted to draft our daughters when they supported the FY 2022 NDAA last September,¹ and reports indicate that the Senate Armed Service Committee has once again passed behind closed doors an amendment to draft our daughters in this year's NDAA. Many of our colleagues made arguments last year² to defend drafting daughters, but these arguments lack both heart and logic. Given that this policy was ultimately stripped from the NDAA in conference, we should not again allow a provision in the NDAA that drafts our daughters.

On the merits, this is an absurd policy decision. First, women and men are different. Women are just not as capable as men in combat roles. For example, 7 years ago the Marine Corps spent \$36 million on a study that found that all male combat units outperform mixed-sex units in combat tasks about 70% of the time.³ Further, a Naval Health Research Centers study has showed that most women cannot meet combat arms standards while most men can.⁴ In fact, before the Army recently dropped gender neutral physical fitness standards, nearly 50% of female soldiers could not pass previous versions of the test.⁵ Putting aside the issues that arise with mixing the sexes — particularly in a draft setting — *certain* women can be as capable as *certain* men. But, on

¹ <https://clerk.house.gov/Votes/2021293>

² <https://roy.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/roy.house.gov/files/Rep.%20Roy%20NDAA%20Speaker%20Ultimatum%20Final%2010.6.21.pdf>

³ <https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/wisr-studies/USMC%20-%20University%20of%20Pittsburgh%20Ground%20Combat%20Element%20Integrated%20Task%20Force%20Research%20Final%20Report%2015%20Aug.pdf>

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/2394531-marine-corps-force-integration-plan-summary.html>

⁴ <https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/wisr-studies/USMC%20-%20NHRC%20Analysis%20in%20Support%20of%20the%20Women%20in%20Service%20Restrictions%20Review%20Study.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/10/nearly-half-of-female-soldiers-still-failing-new-army-fitness-test-while-males-pass-easily.html>

average, it's simply not true that in combat settings both sexes fare the same overall.

Second, some have argued that women will never be drafted anyway. But the fact is, of course they will be. Some of our colleagues won't even call pregnant women "women." Further, the same government that left billions of dollars of equipment in the hands of the Taliban, left Americans and SIVs behind in danger, leave our borders wide open, push for defunding police, mandate vaccines, and eliminate life-saving treatments cannot be trusted to not draft our daughters.

In this, many have argued that we will never need the draft again, but this cannot be certain – there have been two drafts in my own father's lifetime, and one in mine. And if this is a belief of Members, then this undermines the purpose of drafting women anyway.

Third, this policy is not needed and is nothing more than another symbol of "equity." There are around 17 million men of draft-registration age and some 60 million of "fighting age" from age 18 up to 49, the vast majority of whom are able-bodied.⁶ If we need women for combat operations because we can't muster a strong response from those numbers, then we've messed up so badly that we're doomed anyway. It won't matter who we are at war with, be it China or any other country.

Fourth, it doesn't matter if any other country does it. We are America and we make our own laws based on what is good for our country. Some of our colleagues have pointed to Israel as an example of this, however we have 1.3 million active-duty volunteer troops, Israel has about 170,000 with conscription in a far more hostile position than ours. Further, there are differences in service requirements for men and women. Males are required to serve 32 months, while females are required to serve 24 months.⁷ And, to date, there are still elite IDF units that remain male only.

Lastly, and despite what many of our colleagues have said, we cannot rely on the idea of abolishing the draft later in order to avoid conscripting women. If I had a dollar for every time Congress has said they would "fix" something down the road, we would have enough to retire the debt we have amassed.

To the many women who have **volunteered** to serve — and the many who have given their lives for, or been injured in service of, our country — thank you, and we are proud of you. However, the reality is that if we are a country that actively chooses to forcibly conscript our daughters, we are past the point of salvation. I urge you to prevent any such provision from being included in the FY 2023 NDAA, or any NDAA thereafter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chip Roy", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chip Roy
Member of Congress

⁶ <https://www.sss.gov/about/>

⁷ <https://www.idf.il/en/minisites/our-soldiers/>